

# National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service Climate Database Modernization Program



**Data Files at the National Climatic Data Center**



**Punched Paper Records**



**Ship's Weather Log**

**The National Requirement:** The Nation has a need to exploit climate information for broad economic and national policy-making benefit. Archived environmental records have the potential to provide great value to the Nation by helping to mitigate the serious economic and life threatening effects of hurricanes, tropical storms, flooding, and other severe weather phenomena through improved planning. Use of this rich data source, collected at great expense over centuries, is severely restricted because it was recorded on media such as logbooks, manuals, microfilm, and charts. This national treasure of climatic data and information needs to be made more accessible to industry, to researchers, and to enable environmentally sensitive economic and political decisions.

**NOAA's Response:** The Climate Database Modernization Program seeks to increase the use of the climate records by improving access to the wealth of information contained in NOAA climate data archives. NESDIS initiated this effort in FY 2000 in response to Congressional concerns regarding access to, and utilization of, the Nation's climate data and history. During the first year of work, NESDIS coordinated climate database modernization work, and made great progress digitizing historical records that were previously available only on microfilm or paper. Additionally, NESDIS is modernizing the handling of new incoming climate data through timely digitizing and rapid loading to Internet-based on-line systems.

Accomplishments already include dramatically improving access to the U.S. climate records by adding 500 million pieces of information to the Nation's climate record, and adding four million surface hourly observations to the climate record through imaging technology. Additionally, a new expanded subscription service is now available to more than 50,000 climate publication subscribers, and historical climate publications previously available only in paper form can now be accessed by thousands of users through digital media.

**Financing:** The FY 2003 Budget includes \$6.2 million for the Climate Database Modernization Program. NESDIS will use these funds to continue building on the numerous accomplishments achieved thus far under Climate Database Modernization Program, to include replacing manually intensive methods of data archival and retrieval with up-to-date digital, Internet based on-line systems.